

Group I claims 1-29, directed to a method of providing a substrate structure;

Group II claims 30-51, directed to a substrate structure;

Group III claims 52-71, directed to a device that includes the substrate structure of the Group II claims;

Group IV claim 72, directed to the use of the substrate structure defined by the Group II claims; and

Group V claim 73, directed to the device defined by the Group III claims.

Applicants elect, with traverse, Group II claims 30-51.

It is respectfully submitted that, contrary to the Examiner's statement, the claims of Groups I and IV are directed to the same general inventive concept as the claims of Group II because all of these claims include the same corresponding technical features. Thus, the requirement for restriction among the claims of Groups I, II and IV should be withdrawn; and all of claims 1-51 and 72 should be examined on their merits.

It is apparent from a comparison of claim 1 (Group I) to claim 30 (Group II) that practicing the method defined by claim 1 results in the substrate structure defined by claim 30. For example,

- Claim 1 states that at least one alignment layer is deposited on the substrate; and claim 30 states that an alignment layer is on the substrate.
- Claim 1 states that a mono-or multi-layer of a liquid crystal material is deposited on the at least one alignment layer; and claim 30 states that a mono-or multi-layer of liquid crystal material is on the alignment layer; and

- Claim 1 states that a combined alignment layer is deposited on the basic substrate; and claim 30 states that a combined alignment layer is on the basic substrate.

It is respectfully submitted that since claims 1 and 30 include the same limitations, albeit claim 1 recites those limitations to practice a method and claim 30 recites those very same limitations to provide a substrate structure produced by the claimed method, a common inventive concept is present in claims 1 and 30. Since the Examiner found as the basis for his restriction requirement that the groups of claims "lack the same or corresponding special technical features," and since the claims of Groups I, II and IV recite the same limitations so as to define "the same or corresponding technical features," resulting in claims having a single general inventive concept, it is respectfully requested that the requirement for restriction among the claims of Groups I, II and IV be withdrawn and that all of claims 1-51 and 72 be examined on their merits.

Applicants' representative agrees that the requirement for restriction is correct insofar as it relates to the claims of Groups III and V, namely, that the claims of Groups III and V are restrictable from the claims of Groups I, II and IV. However, Applicants' representative believes that claim 73 (the Group V claim) should be examined with claims 52-71 (the Group III claims) especially since claim 73 depends from claim 52 and, thus, includes the same limitations as recited in claim 52.

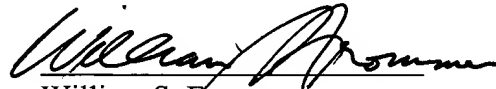
An Office Action on the merits of claims 1-51 and 72 is respectfully solicited.

Applicants reserve their right to file a divisional application to re-present non-elected claims 52-71 and 73.

Respectfully submitted,

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